

THE EAST HAMPTON STAR

SHINES FOR ALL

Advertise • Subscribe • Classifieds • Service Directory • Dining Guide • Store

March 26, 2009



Greg Darvin with his co-worker, Colby

Kate Maier

Darvin's Theory of Eco-Evolution

BY KATE MAIER

Going solar may be a big leap for some, but for Greg Darvin, a longtime environmental advocate and construction professional, leading his business into the world of renewable energy is the end result of a lifetime passion. Launching his new company, Pristine Eco Systems, has been a pleasure for Mr. Darvin, whose personal convictions are mirrored now more than ever in his work.

"I'm not much of a bumper sticker guy," he said, but the one that says "think globally, act locally" has always resonated. Mr. Darvin is ready to take his global perspective and apply it to the local market in East Hampton, where he is hoping that more businesses and

homeowners will hop on the renewable energy bandwagon in light of rising energy costs, incentives, and a renewed spirit of optimism and personal accountability brought about by the Obama administration, he said.

"For me it was one of those things that rattled around in my head for a long time. About a year ago, it became a more serious goal," he said from his second-floor office on Park Place in East Hampton, as his black Lab, Colby, wandered underfoot. "I think you'd have to be dumb, deaf, and blind not to be inspired by the developments in our country, both from an economic standpoint as well as an environmental one."

Mr. Darvin has run Pristine Pools for the past 20 years. The son of a builder, he is more familiar than most with the

workings of a construction site. Aside from the two-pool-related businesses, which include construction and maintenance, he also runs River Rock, a masonry company. With a pre-existing customer base and lots of connections about town, "considering how new the company is, the response has been tremendous," said Mr. Darvin, who is not in the least bit concerned that running four companies out of one office will take its toll.

On the contrary, the interconnected nature of his businesses mirrors the holistic approach he takes to life. "I think they all work in conjunction with each other," he said. "If I all of the sudden tried to become a party planner, I don't think it would work."

While there's no way to manage away years of paper files from Pristine Pools, the new office is "100 percent paperless," he boasted, reflecting his commitment to the environment. "We're really looking at it as a holistic lifestyle."

Pristine Eco Systems offers a full spectrum of renewable energy options that Mr. Darvin promised could be tailored to each customer's specific needs. Solar-electric and hot water systems,

geothermal systems, water filtration, and home efficiency audits are all on the menu. With a licensed electrician on-board, "a lot of practical solar expertise" will be brought to the table.

With a new president in office, Mr. Darvin said the time is ripe for change. The eco-friendly and clean energy goals embodied in Mr. Obama's campaign were only compounded, he said, by "the energy of the country after last year's gas prices and fuel costs."

Energy is only getting more expensive, said Mr. Darvin, noting that the Long Island Power Authority "just put in for a raise." But "the beauty of solar is it really gives you an opportunity to fix your utility costs," he said, with the added benefit that any surplus is sold back to LIPA. Attractive incentives including tax credits and rebates also sweeten the pot.

"I don't know why every building in East Hampton Village isn't doing it, except that for most commercial buildings, the owner of the building doesn't pay the electric bill."

Mr. Darvin said that in the construction business, green principles are here to stay. "It really is the way construction is going." The only caveat, he said, is it seems that "all of the sudden, every failed tradesman is a solar rep" in a young industry with little formal regulation for builders.

Mr. Darvin is confident, however, that his track record and expertise will make Pristine Eco Systems a cut above the rest. "Unless I knew I could do it and be the best at it, it wasn't worth the risk," he said. "I'm confident we have the ability to be the best."